

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on June 4, 2009 has been entered. Claims 95-102, 104, and 113-121 are pending. Furthermore, please note that the amendment to the specification was entered April 28, 2009 and along with applicant's amendments to independent claim 95 the previous 35 USC 101 rejection noted in the office action dated February 3, 2009 has been overcome.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Samuel Campbell, attorney of record on August 26, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

95. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising:

a computer-readable storage medium comprising a program code encoded therein, wherein

the program code is configured to be executed by a processor,

the program code comprises a plurality of logic blocks,

the logic blocks are configured to customize a product, and

the logic blocks comprise

a first logic block configured to create a customizable product, wherein the customizable product comprises a set of one or more attributes, and the set of one or more attributes defines the customizable product;

a second logic block configured to assign the customizable product to a customizable product class, wherein the customizable product class is a parent class of a hierarchy, the hierarchy is configured to define a configurator, the configurator is configured to reference the hierarchy to permit configuration of the customizable product, and

the configuration of the customizable product is performed using a customizable user interface mapped to the customizable product to provide a graphical user interface ("UI") , the customizable user interface comprising:

a user interface theme, the user interface theme including a set of properties, the user interface theme selected from a set of theme templates;

a user interface control, the user interface control associated with a set of customizable product attributes; and

a user interface group, the user interface group includes a set of one or more of the user interface controls;

a third logic block configured to add a component product class to the customizable product class, wherein

the component product class is a subclass of the customizable product class,

the component product class comprises one or more component products, each of the one or more component products is configured to be selected using the customizable UI user interface, and

each of the one or more component products is configured to be added to the customizable product, upon selection of if the each of the one or more component products is selected using the customizable UI user interface;

a fourth logic block configured to provide natural language templates, wherein each template contains a fill-in-the-blank sentence in a natural language syntax;

a fifth logic block configured to add a customizable class rule to the customizable product class, wherein

the customizable class rule prohibits the selection of one or more component products for addition to the customizable product after selection of a specific component product for addition to the customizable product, and

the customizable class rule is generated by selecting one or more natural language templates, and filling in each blank in each selected template with one or more of the customizable product class, the component product class, an attribute

of the customizable product class, an attribute of the component product class, a mathematical expression, and a non-selected natural language template; and a sixth logic block configured to map the customizable UI user interface to the customizable product class, wherein the customizable UI user interface is configured to provide access structure to the configurator.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Upon review of the evidence at hand, it is hereby concluded that the evidence obtained and made of record, alone or in combination, neither anticipates, reasonably teaches, nor renders obvious the below noted features of applicant's invention as the noted features amount to more than a predictable use of elements in the prior art. The allowable features include "the customizable user interface comprising: a user interface theme, the user interface theme including a set of properties, the user interface theme selected from a set of theme templates; a user interface control, the user interface control associated with a set of customizable product attributes; and a user interface group, the user interface group includes a set of one or more of the user interface controls."

In addition to the above, the Examiner emphasizes the interrelation of the above distinguishing elements with the remainder of each respective claim element, and further notes that it is the interrelation that truly distinguishes Applicant's invention from the evidence at hand. Moreover, none of the evidence at hand teaches or suggests the combination of features claimed, nor does there exist an appropriate rationale for further modification of the evidence at hand.

Gorti (See PTO-892, reference U), the closest non-patent literature of record, discloses product configuration relationships and rules used to determine constraints. Gorti, however, neither alone nor in combination with the other prior art teaches or suggests the noted limitations above.

It is hereby asserted by the Examiner that, in light of the above and in further deliberation over all of the evidence at hand, that the claims are allowable as the evidence at hand does not anticipate the claims and does not render obvious any further modification of the references to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JASON B. DUNHAM whose telephone number is (571)272-8109. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeff Smith can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jason Dunham/ 8/28/09
Jason Dunham